

We will miss the Reverend Ronald B. Christian from Christian Love Baptist Church.

□ 2030

RESILIENT FEDERAL FORESTS ACT

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District, which I am proud to represent, includes the Allegheny National Forest. The forest covers more than 500,000 acres, and the use of its hardwoods has supported the communities of the Elk, Forest, McKean, and Warren Counties for generations.

Mr. Speaker, since these small towns depend on the harvesting of trees from the Allegheny National Forest, I am deeply concerned by the news that, while the amount of timber cut in the forest has increased in recent years, the number sold has sharply declined.

In fact, timber sales have gone down 19 percent in the past 5 years. Furthermore, a majority of the timber harvested is being sold as pulp and not as the high-value hardwood which is used to create furniture, flooring, and as veneers.

This is one of the reasons I cosponsored the Resilient Federal Forests Act, which passed the House earlier this year, as it would enhance the management efforts in our national forests to make sure our quality hardwoods are being used in the right ways.

CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS: RACE RELATIONS IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY) is recognized for half the remaining time, until 10 p.m., as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor and privilege to lead tonight's Congressional Black Caucus Special Order hour. For 60 minutes, we have the opportunity to speak directly to the American people.

Before we get to business, I do want to take a moment to express my condolences and the prayers of the Congressional Black Caucus and this Congress to our allies in France after Friday night's attacks in Paris.

Our hearts go out to the victims and their families. No act of terror can shake the resolve of the French people

to live free, and nothing will impede France's ability to live prosperously. I want the people of France to know that the American people and this Congress stand in solidarity with the people of France tonight. I say this with full faith and confidence that no act of terror will deter France or the United States from embracing the principles of liberty, equality, and brotherhood.

Our hearts also go out to those who recently lost loved ones and friends in Beirut and Nigeria.

Mr. Speaker, in this hour, the Congressional Black Caucus will have a conversation with America about the issue of race relations in this country. This isn't a new topic of discussion. To be honest, I really wish there were no need and no appetite remaining in America so as to have to address this topic.

It is amazing that the same nation that saw pilgrims journey to our shores on the Mayflower and that the same nation that saw Founding Father Ben Franklin make groundbreaking discoveries in electric science is the same nation that was able to land a man on the Moon and harness the electromagnetic spectrum for our mobile devices. We still wrestle with the same problem that confronted Ben Franklin and the Founding Fathers so long ago: the issue of race relations in America.

As President Obama so eloquently remarked, the answer to the slavery question was already embedded within our Constitution—a Constitution that had at its very core the ideal of equal citizenship under the law, a Constitution that promised its people liberty and justice and a union that could be and should be perfected over time.

Yet these words were not enough to deliver slaves from bondage or to provide men and women of every color and creed with their full rights and obligations as citizens of the United States.

It is this inherited sin that has guided a national history of challenging race relations in America, from slavery to the Three-Fifths Compromise, to a nation divided and broken over the issue of slavery, to poll taxes and literacy tests, to separate but equal, to Japanese internment, to anti-Semitism, to the Tuskegee experiment, to Brown v. The Board of Education, to the loving Confederate flags at State houses, to the Confederate statues in this Capitol, and to parishioners executed during a Charleston Bible study, executed in the hopes that it would spark a race war. It is the sad truth that, while race relations do not define us as a nation, ignoring and perverting these relations has left a painful blemish on our national record.

Mr. Speaker, many times this year the Congressional Black Caucus has come before you in this hour to discuss the issue of Black voter suppression in America, the mass incarceration of African American males in America, the issue of Black Lives Matter, community fears over unfair and unequal treatment at the hands of bad apple

law enforcement officers, and the economic concerns of communities of color.

These concerns aren't made up. The impact and evidence of these concerns can be found everywhere for proof. Look at Amendments 13 through 15. Look at the issue of African Americans having higher rates of mortality than any other racial ethnic group for 8 of the top 10 causes of death. Look at the Black Lives Matter protests that we have had across the country. These concerns are our reality, and we must know these things to be true. We know more must be done to strengthen our national record on race.

Tonight I want to use my time to discuss race relations in America, but I want to do so in a way that looks forward and not behind. I want to have a conversation about strengthening our national foundation and about healing the racial wounds of our past. In this conversation about race relations in America, I will highlight areas of need and opportunity that should be examined. Tonight's conversation should be a strong step toward progress.

It is my true honor and pleasure to coanchor this hour with my distinguished colleague from New Jersey, a man who has committed his time in Congress to strengthening communities and bridging cultures.

I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey, the Honorable DONALD PAYNE, Jr., my colleague.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Illinois. It has been a labor of love that we have represented the Congressional Black Caucus in these Special Order hours this year.

Our year is coming to a close. As we look back at the issues that we have discussed over the course of this year, it has been an honor and a privilege to work alongside my colleague, R. KELLY.

As for tonight's issue, we have seen in recent weeks a number of racially charged incidents that have set off protests on college campuses across the country. From the University of Missouri to Yale, students have protested the inadequate responses of their school administrations to racism and harassment against minority students. We have seen the failure of many college administrations to properly address overt racism against minority students on campus.

Adding to the anxiety felt by these students have been threats of violence against African American students and faculty. In many instances, there is a disconnect between students of color and the university leaders.

In many of these instances, administrators have openly acknowledged that their responses to minority students have come too late and that their behavior has failed to take into consideration the concerns of students and the injustices against those students.

This is an extension of the debate over interactions—often deadly—between law enforcement and African